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"If the House reject this petition," [which it *did reject*] "notwithstanding the strong grounds upon which it is supported, what will be the consequence? What a proud precedent shall ministers have to boast of in this precious sample of their Treasury correspondence—then may they fix a Treasurer in every county, in every town, in every borough, then may each member circulate through his respective bar-rack department, *the decree of the government against the subject's birthright*; provided only that they keep within the cautious limits of their precious precedent; provided only they do not pronounce actual menace; provided only they convey, through the medium of an *innocent* freeholder's letter, a bribe taken from the public money; provided they keep within such limits, they are safe—the precedent of this night will bear them out, *and they will again find a House of Commons who will countenance them in their breach of that House's privileges, and in the violation of the subject's constitutional rights*, provided only that in the act of such breach and violation, the forms of discreetness and decorum prescribed in the present precedent, be observed."—MR. PERCEVAL'S Speech, on the Hampshire Petition, 21st Feb. 1807.

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TO THE
FREE AND INDEPENDENT ELECTORS
OF THE
CITY AND LIBERTIES OF WESTMINSTER.
LETTER XIV.

GENTLEMEN,

The event, which we anticipated, has already taken place, the parliament has been dissolved, and another is immediately to be called.—This is a proper, and most favourable time, for us to take a view of our national situation, particularly as far as relates to any real share of political power, which the people enjoy through the means of that House, which is, when assembled, said to contain their *representatives*.

Upon the intrigues and cabals and contests which have led to the dissolution of parliament, I have already taken the liberty to address you; and, my present intention is, first to give an account of the last transactions of the House of Commons, and of the prorogation and dissolution, and then to offer you a few observations thereon.

After the late ministers had lost their places, and, with those places, *their majority* in the parliament, they began, as has been the invariable custom in similar cases for many years past, to make what is called "*An Opposition*"; they began to make motions for inquiry into abuses; they began to set about harrassing those who had succeeded them; in short, they began to use all the means in their power to turn out their successors, and, of course, to get into place again themselves. Their successors, however, in nowise disposed to yield their places, and thinking them not secure without changing the House of Commons which had been elected during the day of their

opponents' influence, advised the king to dissolve the parliament; and, accordingly, dissolved it was, after a statement of the *reasons* had been given to the two Houses in the following speech, delivered by commission, on Monday, the 27th of last month. But, before I insert the speech, let me dwell for a moment on the critical circumstances, as to time, under which the parliament was prorogued. There had been appointed during the power and influence of the late ministry, a committee denominated the "*Committee of Finance*," and the *professed* object of it was to produce economy by examining into and correcting *abuses*; but, the real object, on their part, seemed to be to amuse the nation, and, perhaps, to let their opponents (who had been in offices while the abuses were committed) see, that they had a rod ready pickled for them. This committee appeared, accordingly, to be doing little or nothing for several months; but, as soon as the places of the late ministers had been filled with other men, the Committee of Finance became wonderfully diligent; and, some of the late ministers themselves, who were members of the Committee, and who had scarcely ever attended it before, *now attended it every day*! Upon a remark of this sort being made, Lord Henry Petty observed, that his occupations as a minister took up so much of his time, that he was unable to attend the Committee before; but that, having been released from those duties, he had now time sufficient to attend the Committee. Be the cause, however, what it may, the effect was, that the Committee made a progress truly astonishing; insomuch that it had, in the course of a few days, made discoveries of enormous misapplications and defalcations; and, it is positively stated, that they had a report drawn up, and ready to lay be-

fore the House on Monday evening. But, of this their alacrity and dispatch others were acquainted as well as themselves, and, just as they were going to make this report, which must have speedily found its way out into the world, came a command for the House to attend in the House of Lords, where they heard a speech, which, at once prevented the making of the report of the Committee of Finance, which annihilated that Committee, and which put an end to the existence of the House itself. Lord Howick wished, apparently, to say something, there was an anxious desire, on the part of the late ministry, to send forth something to the public by way of exposure; but, the *Usher of the Black Rod*, was ready at the door some minutes before the Speaker arrived; and, the moment the latter took the chair, the former, with his three well-known knocks at the door, sealed up the lips of every one present, and the House was compelled to go to the Lords to hear its death pronounced. With this little preface, gentlemen, we shall proceed with advantage to the perusal of the speech, every word of which is worthy of our attention.

“MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—We have it in command from his Majesty to inform you that his Majesty has thought fit to avail himself of the first moment which would admit of an interruption of the sitting of Parliament, without material inconvenience to the public business, to close the present Session: and that his Majesty has therefore been pleased to cause a commission to be issued, under the great seal, for proroguing parliament. —We are further commanded to state to you, that his Majesty is anxious to recur to the sense of his people, while the events which have recently taken place are yet fresh in their recollection.—His Majesty feels, that in resorting to this measure, under the present circumstances, he at once demonstrates, in the most unequivocal manner, his own conscientious persuasion of the rectitude of those motives upon which he has acted; and affords to his people the best opportunity of testifying their determination to support him in every exercise of the prerogatives of his crown, which is conformable to the sacred obligations under which they are held, and conducive to the welfare of his kingdom, and to the security of the constitution.—His Majesty directs us to express his entire conviction that, after so long a reign, marked by a series of indulgences to his Roman Catholic sub-

jects, they, in common with every other class of his people, must feel assured of his attachment to the principles of a just and enlightened toleration; and of his anxious desire to protect equally, and promote impartially, the happiness of all descriptions of his subjects.—GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,—His Majesty has commanded us to thank you, in his Majesty's name, for the supplies which you have furnished for the public service.—He has seen, with great satisfaction, that you have been able to find the means of defraying, in the present year, those large but necessary expenses, for which you have provided, without imposing upon his people the immediate burden of additional taxes.—His Majesty has observed with no less satisfaction the inquiries which you have instituted into subjects connected with public economy; and, he trusts, that the early attention of a new parliament, which he will forthwith direct to be called, will be applied to the prosecution of these important objects.—MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—His Majesty has directed us most earnestly to recommend to you, that you should cultivate, by all means in your power, a spirit of union, harmony, and good will amongst all classes and descriptions of his people.—His Majesty trusts that the divisions naturally and unavoidably excited by the late unfortunate and uncalled for agitation of a question so interesting to the feelings and opinions of his people, will speedily pass away; and that the prevailing sense and determination of all his subjects to exert their united efforts in the cause of their country, will enable his Majesty to conduct to an honourable and secure termination, the great contest in which he is engaged.”

Now, Gentlemen, the question which is particularly interesting to us, is, what was the real cause of this dissolution.—Those public prints, which are partizans of the late ministry, assert, that the cause was not that which is held forth in the speech of the Lords Commissioners; though men who reflect coolly before they write or speak, may censure so hasty and disrespectful an assertion, particularly as coming from the friends of regular government, social order, and our holy religion; but, it is but fair to hear what they say, which we will do, contrasting it with the assertion of their opponents, and then form our opinion.—The Morning Chronicle, which, as we well know, is the official partizan of the late

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ministry, contained, on the 27th of April, the following article :—“ The present ministry, in dissolving the parliament, can have no other than the most manifest party objects. They cannot pretend to appeal to the people at large. as to the wisdom of their measures. They cannot pretend as yet to have claims to confidence from the experience of the past. They therefore avail themselves of a wicked clamour, which only one of them has had the front to avow and to justify ; and while a certain degree of effervescence exists in the public mind, they will endeavour to procure a house of commons to their purpose by every method which the actual state of the representation enables them to employ. They have brought this matter *more home to the senses of the people of this country than all the reforming societies for the last thirty years.*—But besides the object of getting a parliament more favourable to them than the present, the new ministers have another motive in dissolving the parliament without delay. The committee of the house of commons lately appointed are *daily making discoveries* of the greatest importance, and if they sat but a month longer, it is impossible to say who might not be effected. Committees like this would make every department responsible. We are informed that something very important is come out respecting an issue of *one hundred thousand pounds of the public money, which remains wholly unaccounted for.* The proceedings and progress of the committee leave us no doubt of the determination to dissolve this parliament. It is absolutely necessary for *certain persons, that inquiry should be quashed.*—As to the party objects which ministers expect to gain, we are confident they will be disappointed. None of the present ministers, nor any man who supports them will, on the ground of their merits, try a popular election. Lord Castlereagh will not stand for the county of Down, but will sneak into an English borough. We do not believe that all their influence will carry even one member for Westminster, if proper candidates offer. In Ireland they will gain nothing, even with the menaced vigour of Mr. Perceval hanging over that country. Notwithstanding all the courtly doctrine and the religious bigotry, by which the ministerial candidates recommend themselves, the people at large have not been deluded, and are very little inclined to support the present minis-

try.—We have said, and we repeat, that it is the discoveries made, and likely to be made, by the committee of the house of commons, that have precipitated this dissolution. We hope, however, if there is time this day, that some independent member of parliament *will state the facts and point out the true causes of the dissolution.* It would be of the greatest service to the public. In one of the parliaments of Charles I. when a house of commons was about to be dissolved for its faithful examination of public abuses, the famous Sir Edward Coke boldly came forward and *named* the Duke of Buckingham as the great grievance of the nation, and in himself comprehending every other grievance. If there were a member of the house of commons bold enough to follow this example, and to *denounce the abuses ministers wish to screen, he might do his country infinite service, and check that torrent of corruption which must in the end, if unchecked, lead to the most fatal consequences.*—The sudden dissolution of the parliament at a time so many private bills have at a vast expense been carried almost to their termination, must be greatly felt by many individuals. But ministers had no time to lose, and therefore they cannot be blamed. Their existence and that of the present parliament was incompatible. They had not a moment to lose, and it is no wonder that they preferred themselves and *those who at present protect them, for the sake of protection,* to every consideration of public advantage.”—Before we take the other extract from the Morning Chronicle, we may be permitted, perhaps, just to ask Mr. Perry, since when it is, that he has discovered there is a “*torrent of corruption*” existing in our government, seeing, that not many weeks have passed since he severely rebuked all those, who threw out insinuations that the government stood at all in need of correction. But, Mr. Perry is now *out of place.* Place and profit are apt to produce mental blindness as to such matters ; and, it is truly fortunate for the country and for truth, that place and profit have been taken from the late ministers. They will now see abuses with eyes very different indeed from those that they saw them with before ; but, Gentlemen, however much we may rejoice at the exposures which they will make (for make them they will), we must never lose sight of the fact, that, while in office, they used every art in their power to prevent similar exposures. Never, do what they will, in the way of exposure, never shall I

forget their abominable treatment of Mr. Paull, whose only crime, in their eyes, was, that he wanted to make exposures. Their treatment, too, of poor *Atkins*, the Barrack Master, whom they completely ruined, if not starved to death, with his numerous family. This is another thing which will always occur to my mind, when I hear them inveighing against *abuses*. When Mr. Robson moved for the papers relating to the Barracks in the Isle of Wight, we remember with what difficulty he obtained them; and, I do hope, that we never shall forget, that Lord Henry Petty refused the papers, in the first instance, merely upon the ground, that Mr. Robson *had not submitted his motion to the ministers before he made it!* Any thing more arrogant than this, more hostile to all notions of freedom of deliberation, more degrading to the House of Commons, I never heard of in my life. And all this was justified by Mr. Perry. It was all applauded by him, who has now discovered, that it is blameable in ministers to screen those, who have been guilty of speculation. He told us, that *wise* men went slowly to work in such matters; that it was easy to set up a cry about abuses; but, that, to reform them was a thing that required consideration. All his heroes, too, took the same tone; they discovered no haste in reformations of any sort; they seemed to set inquiries on foot for mere party purposes; and, in no one instance, did they seriously attempt to bring any public robber to justice. —But, let us hear him again from his paper of the 28th of April. —“What we

“ yesterday stated, has taken place; parliament is dissolved, and dissolved in such a

“ manner as leaves no doubt whatever of

“ the motives which led to it. We have now

“ to state a fact in corroboration of what

“ we yesterday mentioned, and we defy

“ *all the swindlers* in the country, great

“ and small, to deny it. Nay, we defy

“ any member of the present administration

“ to deny it. —The finance committee of

“ the house of commons met yesterday, and

“ had prepared a report to be presented to

“ the house, but they were prevented by an

“ artifice of ministers, which would have

“ been worthy of *all the swindlers* in

“ the country. —The members of the

“ committee were in the house, and the

“ chairman was ready to present the re-

“ port. Ministers, however aware of what

“ might take place, and dreading a charge

“ that would have been made against a most

“ notorious peculator and defaulter, kept

“ the Usher of the Black Rod in attendance

“ at the door of the house of commons, and

“ the instant PRAYERS were over, the

“ Black Rod rapped, and being introduced,

“ summoned the house to the house of

“ peers. By this manœuvre did the new

“ ministry prevent the formal present-

“ ment of the speculators who have been

“ plundering the public. — We are happy,

“ however, in being able to relate, in addi-

“ tion to the above circumstances (the truth

“ of which we challenge any man to deny)

“ that the report of the committee of fi-

“ nance, states in substance, that a sum of

“ 19,800*l.* had been applied by a late pay-

“ master of the forces to his own use, and

“ that *this fact came to the knowledge of his*

“ *colleague, the Right Honourable George*

“ *Rose, who did not give any direction to*

“ *the clerks on the subject.* —The report also

“ states, that the committee had discovered

“ *other and great abuses in the public mo-*

“ *ney concerns, on which they should short-*

“ *ly proceed to report.* —These are facts,

“ for the truth of which we pledge our-

“ selves. We leave it then to the public to

“ judge of the motives which led to the pre-

“ sent precipitate dissolution. It is, indeed,

“ a strange thing that those who have on

“ every occasion, and now most palpably,

“ endeavoured to protect the speculators of

“ the public money, should have the impu-

“ dence to hold themselves out as most dis-

“ tinguished for their affection to pure and

“ undefiled religion, and their attachment

“ to the church of England! Such hypo-

“ crisy is truly shocking. —The proceeding

“ of yesterday, and the management of the

“ Black Rod to prevent disagreeable observa-

“ tions, so forcibly reminds us of the con-

“ duct of that misguided Prince, Charles I.

“ on a case very similar, that we cannot help

“ detailing the circumstances. On the 5th

“ day of June, 1628, Sir John Finch, the

“ Speaker of the House of Commons, de-

“ livered a message to the house from the

“ king, importing that his majesty had fix-

“ ed a day for putting an end to their ses-

“ sion, and therefore required that they

“ should not enter into a new business, or

“ lay *aspersion on the government or minis-*

“ *ters thereof.* This produced a warm de-

“ bate, in which Sir John Elliot, advanc-

“ ing somewhat as if he meant to touch the

“ Duke of Buckingham, the Speaker rose

“ up and said “ *There is a command upon*

“ *me that I must command you not to pro-*

“ *ceed.*” Upon this a deep silence ensued;

“ and then the house resolved itself into a

“ committee to consider what was fit to

“ be done; and ordered that no man should

“ go out on pain of going to the Tower.

“ The Speaker, however, desired leave to

“ withdraw, and had leave so to do; and
 “ Mr. Whitby being in the chair, Sir Ed-
 “ ward Coke spoke to the following effect.
 “ —“ We have dealt with that duty and
 “ “ moderation, that never was the like,
 “ “ *rebus sic tantibus*, after such a viola-
 “ “ tion of the liberties of the subject.
 “ “ Let us take this to heart. In 30 Ed.
 “ “ III. were they then in doubt in parlia-
 “ “ ment to name men that misled the
 “ “ King? They accused John de Gaunt,
 “ “ the King’s son; and Lord Latimer and
 “ “ Lord Nevil, for misadvising the King;
 “ “ and they went to the Tower for it.
 “ “ Now, when there is such a downfall
 “ “ of the state, shall we hold our tongues?
 “ “ How shall we answer our duties to God
 “ “ and men? 7 H. IV. par Rot. No. 31,
 “ “ 32; and 11 Hen. IV. No. 13, there
 “ “ the council are complained of, and re-
 “ “ moved from the King. They mewed
 “ “ up the King, and dissuaded him from
 “ “ the common good. And why are we
 “ “ now retired from that way we were in?
 “ “ Why may we not name those that are
 “ “ the cause of all our evils? In 4 H. III.
 “ “ and 27 E. III. and 13 R. II. the parlia-
 “ “ ment moderateth the King’s preroga-
 “ “ tive; and nothing groweth to abase
 “ “ but this House hath power to treat of
 “ “ it. What shall we do? Let us palliate
 “ “ no longer; if we do, God will not
 “ “ prosper us. *I think the Duke of Buck-*
 “ “ *ingham is the cause of all our miseries;*
 “ “ and till the King be informed thereof,
 “ “ we shall never go out with honour, or
 “ “ sit with honour here. That man is the
 “ “ grievance of grievances. Let us set
 “ “ down the causes of all our grievances,
 “ “ and all will reflect upon him.”—
 “ Such was the bold and constitutional lan-
 “ guage held by Sir Edward Coke, the
 “ greatest lawyer this country ever saw, at
 “ a time, too, when the liberties of the peo-
 “ ple were unconfirmed. He had no hesi-
 “ tation in denouncing the authors of ill
 “ advice, and showed that the House had a
 “ right to name evil counsellors, even the
 “ KING’S SON, and to moderate the pre-
 “ rogative even to the removal of the coun-
 “ cil or ministry that “ dissuaded the King
 “ from the common good.”—And yet
 “ such lawyers as Mr. Perceval say, that the
 “ King’s right to chuse his ministers is too
 “ sacred for the House of Commons to offer
 “ its advice upon.—But the management
 “ yesterday far excels that of the unfortu-
 “ nate Charles. The Black Rod is planted
 “ at the door to make it impossible to in-
 “ form the King of those things, without
 “ informing him of which, as Sir Edward

“ Coke says, “ The House could neither go
 “ out with honour nor sit with honour
 “ there.” Ministers yesterday did better
 “ than the counsellors that brought the un-
 “ fortunate Charles to ruin. They utterly
 “ quashed all appeal to the King. They
 “ checked all denunciation of abuses, and
 “ took a desperate chance of getting a par-
 “ liament that will overlook these proceed-
 “ ings, that will screen delinquents, that
 “ will connive at peculation. What can be
 “ expected indeed from those who conduct-
 “ ed the scene of yesterday? To what can
 “ it be compared, and indeed their whole
 “ conduct, but to the device of a gang of
 “ pickpockets, who raise a false cry and get
 “ together a mob on any clamour, to enable
 “ a detected accomplice to escape, and to fa-
 “ cilitate new depredations? Such is the cry
 “ of the danger of the church, set up by
 “ men who thus notoriously, and in the
 “ most public manner, have quashed the
 “ denunciation of the most scandalous
 “ abuses.”—As to the instances of the
 “ reign of Charles I. Mr. Perry may be as-
 “ sured, that they will have very little terrors
 “ for those, whom he wishes to intimidate,
 “ and who know full well, that, from a par-
 “ liament, whenever it shall meet, composed
 “ for one half of placemen and pensioners, and
 “ for nearly the other half, of dealers in the
 “ funds, there is no patriotism to be dreaded.
 “ The new ministers, in whatever else they
 “ may be deficient, are not wanting in politi-
 “ cal cunning. They know that Charles’s
 “ parliaments were made of stubborn stuff.
 “ They know, that he dissolved them over and
 “ over again; and, that, at every return, he
 “ found them more and more resolved to check
 “ the abuses of the times; and the new mi-
 “ nisters also know, that exactly the contrary
 “ is always the effect of a dissolution now-a-
 “ days. The new ministers know that poor
 “ Charles’s parliaments refused him money;
 “ and they know, that, in no case whatever,
 “ for these thirty years past, has any House
 “ of Commons refused to vote whatever mo-
 “ ney the minister of the day demanded, the
 “ only question, in any case, being, merely
 “ that of how the money shall be raised. The
 “ new ministers know exactly how many of
 “ the members of the last parliament will be
 “ turned out; and, the late ministers know it
 “ too, for they took care to have the managing
 “ of an election. The new ministers may not
 “ know the causes of this great change in the
 “ nature of the House of Commons since the
 “ reign of Charles the First; they, possibly,
 “ may never have reflected upon the effect of
 “ the funding and taxing system with respect
 “ to the constitution of the House of Com-

mons; they, possibly, may not have perceived, that, in establishing the national debt, the power of refusing money was, in fact, taken from that House; they, possibly, may not have had leisure to trace the pliancy of the House of Commons to its real cause; but, they are extremely well versed as to the effects; and Mr. Perry may quote and hint 'till he is tired about the "*ill-advised* and "*unfortunate Charles*," whose head, could he dig it up and restore it to the state in which it was immediately after amputation, would have no terrors for Mr. Perceval or Mr. Canning, unless Mr. Perry could, at the same time, prove to them, that there were a *Hampden* or two amongst their opponents, amongst those men, who doubled the income tax, who added a third to the pensions of the princes, while they exempted the funded property of the king from the income tax, at a time when they declared that, in imposing taxes, they were reduced to a choice of evils; those men, who, having discovered the famous loan of Pitt to Boyd and Benfield, moved for a bill of indemnity for his conduct; those men, who, amongst their very first acts, almost doubled the number of foreign troops in the kingdom; those men, who have declared, that Hanover ought to be as dear to us as Hampshire; those men, who, after having opposed Pitt for twenty years, after having, upon numerous occasions, represented him as the waster of our property, as the subverter of our liberty, and as the destroyer of the character and consequence of the country, voted for making us pay his debts, expressly upon the score of his *public merits*. Unless Mr. Perry can make Mr. Perceval and Mr. Canning descry a *Hampden* or two amongst these men, he may be assured, that all his comparisons about the reign of the "*ill-advised* and *unfortunate Charles*" will be totally thrown away.—But, is it not truly shocking, Gentlemen, to perceive the rage, into which this dissolution has thrown Mr. Perry and his Whig patrons? They call their opponents "*swindlers*;" nothing less than swindlers; and, in another part of the same paper, they are called *miscreants*; "*the* *miscreants*, who are endeavouring to excite a popular clamour against popery." To be sure such an endeavour is rather in the *miscreant* way; but, it is painful to perceive Mr. Perry, who so lately deprecated "*the* *immoderate licence of debate*," falling into such "*coarse language*." Really I begin to think, that the old hacknied charge of *coarseness*, always preferred against me when I speak a home truth, will begin to attach to these wranglers for the public money, who

have, until lately, always kept up a sort of decorum of phraseology towards one another, like lawyers at the bar, but who now appear to have lost all patience. *Miscreants*, indeed! This is a pretty term to use, as descriptive of statesmen and legislators, acting under "*the best constitution in the world*." *Miscreants*! Why, that is a name to be applied to men, who seek to live entirely upon the earnings of others, who, in *coarse* language, are denominated robbers, or thieves, and who, if not, by some means or other, protected, are frequently transported, or hanged. And, I ask Mr. Perry, if, in his cooler moments, he would have applied such a name to the persons, whom he evidently has in view? What a pity, how sincerely to be deplored, it is, that passion, arising from disappointment in the laudable desire to live upon the public, should so far get the better of the "*gentlemanly*" taste of Mr. Perry. But, really, the quarrel is so much like that between *Peachem* and *Lockit*, that the comparison strikes every one. Never, according to all account, was there such virulence before heard of amongst politicians. The reason, is, the contest is for place and profit. It is purely personal. There is nothing of a public nature that can be made to mix itself with it. Both sides are trying to make the world believe that they are, respectively, contending for principle. One side cries *toleration*: no, says the other, you only want power and profit; your measure was merely intended to nullify the king, and to render yourselves ministers for life. The other side cries *no popery*: you lie in your hearts, says the other, and all you want is to obtain a corrupt majority thereby to secure your power and your profits. Which are we to believe? For my own part, I have a great dislike to contradict people, and am, therefore, rather inclined to give credit to the assertions of both sides.—We must now hear what the partizans of the new ministers say as to the *real cause* of the dissolution; and, we will begin with a short extract from the *Courier* newspaper of the 28th of April, first observing, that this last-named paper is, to the new ministry, what the *Morning Chronicle* is to their predecessors, namely, an instrument of faction, the proprietors and editors respectively having in view no other object than their own gains. It will be observed, that the article I am now about to insert was written by way of comment upon the articles before quoted from the *Morning Chronicle*:—"We are not surprised at the anxiety of all the partizans of the Papists to put the question on other grounds; we are not surprised at

“ their wishing to hear no more of the cry
 “ of the church and state being in danger ;
 “ they would be glad to drown it, no doubt ;
 “ but this cry they shall not drown—the
 “ people shall not fail to be told repeatedly,
 “ that the change of the ministers, and the
 “ necessity of a dissolution so soon after
 “ that unnecessary and uncalled for dissolution
 “ last autumn, have been produced by
 “ these reformers, these “ English Brissot-
 “ ins,” who conceived a measure contrary to
 “ the fundamental laws of the land—a mea-
 “ sure of such obscurity, and power of ex-
 “ tension, that every one explained it his
 “ own way—who, having obtained their
 “ sovereign’s consent to one measure, ex-
 “ tended it to a compass and capacity which
 “ never was in his contemplation—who
 “ were guilty of the most petulant disre-
 “ spect to the King’s authority, in having
 “ consented first to return to the original
 “ measure, and afterwards having insultingly
 “ retracted and refused to do any thing,
 “ because they were not allowed to do all.
 “ Happily, however, for the constitution,
 “ and the prosperity of the country, these
 “ “ English Brissotins” had to deal with a
 “ Sovereign very different from the one
 “ which the “ French Brissotins” had.—
 “ But there is no fear that the people will
 “ be misled by the artifices of “ all the
 “ partisans of the Papists,” or that they will
 “ fail to see that the conduct of the late mi-
 “ nisters has rendered the present dissolu-
 “ tion necessary. But it was to prevent the
 “ presentation of the report of the finance
 “ committee we are told—and ministers
 “ kept the Black Rod in waiting at the door
 “ of the House of Commons to summon
 “ the House the moment prayers were
 “ over, because “ *they dreaded a charge*
 “ *that would have been made against a no-*
 “ *torious peculator and defaulter.*” Here
 “ again we must remind our readers, that
 “ the person alluded to was an officer under
 “ the administration of which Lord Gren-
 “ ville, Mr. Windham, and Lord Spencer
 “ were members. What reason, therefore,
 “ had the present ministers to dread any
 “ charge that could have been made against
 “ the person in question ? But we are re-
 “ lieved from the necessity of saying more
 “ upon this absurd and idle charge, that
 “ parliament was dissolved to stifle the dis-
 “ coveries made by the committee of fi-
 “ nance, by the language held by the Ad-
 “ dington party, who, alluding to this
 “ charge, explicitly declare, that with re-
 “ spect to the committee of finance, we
 “ cannot suppose that any administration
 “ would be weak enough to imagine that

“ public curiosity and enquiry are to be re-
 “ pressed and stifled by such means. The
 “ present ministers well know the men of
 “ whom that committee was composed.
 “ They know that they will do their duty ;
 “ and that, if they have detected any fla-
 “ grant instances of malversation or embez-
 “ zlements, the country will hear them. It
 “ would be the idlest hope that ever was
 “ entertained, to think that a British par-
 “ liament, by a temporary suspension of its
 “ faculties, is to be wholly diverted from
 “ pursuing and hunting down those great
 “ state delinquents, who “ cover and de-
 “ vour” the people. To obviate the im-
 “ pression which such a statement is calcu-
 “ lated to produce, the speech particularly
 “ relies upon “ the inquiries which have
 “ been instituted into subjects connected
 “ with the public economy,” the prosecu-
 “ tion of which is especially recommended
 “ to “ the early attention of the new par-
 “ liament.” Such is the language of the
 “ Addingtons, and it renders it unnecessary
 “ for us to dilate upon the subject.”—
 Yes, such may be “ the language of the
 Addingtons,” but, Gentlemen, it must be
 manifest to every one who is at all acquaint-
 ed with the subject, that the dissolution will
 also *dissolve the Committee of Finance*, set
 aside all their proceedings, afford time,
 which, in such cases, is a great point, and
 will enable the new ministers either to pre-
 vent another Committee of Finance from
 being appointed, or to select for that com-
 mittee whatever persons they may like best
 to have it composed of ; and, in short, that,
 though it may not totally stifle the inquiry,
 it may go nearly that length.—The ob-
 servation of the Courier, that Lords Gren-
 ville and Spencer and Mr. Windham were
 in the cabinet, at the time when the pe-
 culation alluded to was committed, does not
 apply. Their being in the *cabinet* gave
 them no more opportunity of being acquaint-
 ed with this misapplication of the public
 money than it did of the misapplication of
 the 40 thousand pounds by Pitt. This writ-
 ter might almost as reasonably render us re-
 sponsible for it, because we were in the
country at the time when it was committed.
 But, the Courier might have justly charged
 the late ministers of inconsistency in com-
 plaining of this act of peculation after all
 their praises of *Pitt*, who must have been
 acquainted with it, and whose debts they
 have made us pay, upon the score of his
public merits. Here it is that they are as-
 sailable ; but, here no hireling writer will
 ever assail them.—What I have further
 to offer upon this subject I shall defer, till I

have inserted the article from the Morning Post of the 28th instant, which is, indeed, an elaborate, and somewhat pathetic "address to the electors of the United Kingdom," the objects of which being, first, to justify the measure of dissolving the parliament at this time, and, second, to prevail upon those who have really any right of voting, to vote for *men who are opposed to the late ministers*. "The parliament is prorogued, a dissolution is announced, and we hesitate not to applaud what every true lover of his country has anticipated and recommended. When the constitution is invaded, when the throne is attacked, there is only one true legitimate recourse, viz. an appeal to the sense and justice of the people. — His Majesty having found his prerogative and independency menaced and invaded by a cabinet junto, has been obliged to change his ministers. This cabinet junto has dared, as a measure of resentment or defiance, to accuse their Sovereign at the bar of the nation of unconstitutional conduct, and by false statements and unwarranted misrepresentations, to arraign his Majesty as a criminal before his people — They further brought forward in parliament a resolution directly tending to censure his Majesty, though that censure was disguised in general terms. They had not even the decency to suppose that his Majesty was acting by any responsible advisers, but contrary to every principle of the constitution; their measures were so managed as to point at his Majesty alone, as the only guilty and responsible individual, and personally to censure and condemn him. The parliament, however, could not be brought, under any artifice or promises, to support a proposition so dangerous and unconstitutional; yet so deeply connected together, and so widely extended were the adherents of the late cabinet, that 226 members of the House of Commons were induced to join in the censure of their Monarch. — After this unprecedented attempt, the King, with the most perfect consciousness of his integrity and uprightness, has appealed to the GREAT BODY of his subjects, in the firm confidence that they will confirm the decision of the House of Commons, approve the necessary change he has been forced to make of his ministry; and that they will give both him and them that countenance and support, which will on the one hand secure the constitutional independency of the crown; and on the other, enable his present servants to carry on the business

of the nation *with ease and comfort*, un-
 "awed by any combination of parties,
 "which might otherwise conspire to inter-
 "rupt the ordinary proceedings of govern-
 "ment. — We conceive that one of the
 "great and fundamental principles of the
 "British constitution, is this—that the
 "House of Commons is to be considered
 "as the organ of the people, the represen-
 "tative of their power, the interpreter of
 "their will: and whenever the House of
 "Commons speaks, it speaks, in legal and
 "constitutional acceptance, the sense of all
 "the Commons of the empire. — When,
 "therefore, any great question arises affect-
 "ing the rights of any branch of the legis-
 "lature, or the interests of any great de-
 "scription of the people; which was not
 "foreseen or in contemplation at the time
 "the Commons were elected; which it was
 "morally impossible for the electors to
 "have foreseen, and which, consequently,
 "they could not have referred to in the
 "choice of their representatives; it is in
 "strict conformity with the fundamental
 "principles of the constitution, *that an op-
 "portunity should be given TO THE PEO-
 "PLE of expressing their collective sense on
 "the subject, and making their elections con-
 "formably*. This doctrine is so evident as
 "to need no proof, however it may be il-
 "lustrated by stating the converse of it.
 "Let us suppose that the House of Com-
 "mons, when once elected, has a right to
 "sit for its legal period of seven years—it
 "might, by its power over the purse of the
 "nation, dictate both to the Lords and the
 "King, and create a septennial despotism.
 "— We now, then, ask you, whether the
 "late transactions which have taken place
 "on the Catholic Question, were in your
 "contemplation when you elected your
 "late representatives, in October last? —
 "1. Was it in your contemplation that a
 "cabinet junto should, by every possible
 "artifice, by alledged misconception, and
 "by false misrepresentation, endeavour to
 "deceive or to force his Majesty to a total
 "repeal of the test laws, as far as the army
 "and navy are concerned? We answer
 "boldly for you, it was not. — 2. Was it
 "in your contemplation, that, if his Ma-
 "jesty should evince an unshaken firmness
 "in support of his conscientious engage-
 "ments to the state, that his ministers
 "should be authorised to impose upon him
 "conditions which should empower them
 "to turn against him all his influence, pow-
 "er, and prerogative for controuling his
 "opinions, forcing his conscience, and ex-
 "posing his character to obloquy and re-

"proach? We again answer, in your name,
 "that it was not.—3. Was it in your
 "contemplation that, upon the tender of
 "such degrading conditions from his minis-
 "ters, his Majesty should surrender his
 "prerogatives, authority, and independen-
 "cy, into the hands of a cabinet junto?
 "Here, again, we answer for you in the
 "negative.—4. Was it in your contem-
 "plation, that if his Majesty, in endeavour-
 "ing to liberate himself from the attacks of
 "his ministers, should demand them to re-
 "tract the conditions they had imposed up-
 "on him, and to give him an assurance
 "that they would not bring forward again
 "measures connected with the repeal of
 "the test acts, as his ministers, he should
 "be held up to the public as a criminal,
 "should be accused of having violated the
 "constitution, and of having exacted an il-
 "legal pledge of his counsellors? We an-
 "swer again in your name, with confidence,
 "no.—All these circumstances, unpre-
 "cedented and preposterous, form such a
 "combination of measures, as you could
 "neither have foreseen nor conjectured:
 "and which, although they have taken
 "place, you can now hardly believe.—The
 "attack on the King's independency, the
 "efforts to carry a repeal of the test laws,
 "an act of supremacy in favour of Roman
 "Catholics, and of every other Dissenter
 "from the establishment, the attempt of
 "ministers to force the Sovereign to admit
 "the cabinet to act in defiance of his senti-
 "ments, and the accusing the Monarch
 "personally, as guilty of a criminal act, in
 "resisting this attempt, are all measures
 "novel and extraordinary, totally out of
 "the common course and current of affairs,
 "and which require a distinct proceeding,
 "conformable to their importance and no-
 "velty.—Under these impressions, there-
 "fore, the Monarch with *affectionate con-
 "fidence in the attachment of his people,*
 "and with the most *consciencious sense of*
 "*his OWN SINCERITY*, in endeavour-
 "ing to perform the duties, and maintain
 "the trusts committed to his charge,
 "makes a condescending appeal to your sen-
 "timents and impartiality.—1 He has re-
 "fused to give his ministers leave to carry
 "through parliament, with the colour of his
 "consent, a bill, which went to *repeal the*
 "*act of supremacy, and the test acts*, as
 "far as the army and navy are concerned,
 "and to give the capacity of holding the
 "highest naval and military commands to
 "*every species of dissenters* from the church
 "establishment, whatever sect they might
 "belong to, *christain or unchristain*, or

"even if they were of *no religion whatever.*
 "—2. His ministers having demanded that
 "they shall, on abandoning their obnoxious
 "bill, give their sentiments in support of
 "it, and *also give their sentiments in favour*
 "*of the catholic petition when presented;*
 "and, 3dly, he allowed from time to
 "time, to bring forward, for his Majesty's
 "decision, such measures as they thought
 "proper respecting Ireland.—His Majesty
 "did, in answer, desire his ministers to
 "withdraw these commands; and did also
 "desire them to give assurances, that they
 "would not bring forward any measures
 "connected with the Catholic Question, as
 "upon that subject his sentiments could ne-
 "ver alter.—You have now, then, a plain
 "case before you to decide upon.—Is it
 "your wish to force the surrender of the
 "test laws, and to give *the whole power of*
 "*the sword into the hands of catholics*, and
 "of every dissenter from the church esta-
 "blishment? or do you wish to preserve
 "the existing system of general toleration,
 "but at the same time to maintain *the esta-
 "blished guards of the constitution of church*
 "*and state?*" —We might here, at the
 very outset, ask that writer, who affects such
 anxious concern for the preservation of the
 constitution, how he thinks that constitution
 would, in *practice*, be rendered worse than
 it is now by the bill proposed to be passed.
 Does he conceive, that the passing of such a
 bill would add to the taxes? That it would les-
 sen the value of our *election* rights? That it
 would make the house of commons more sub-
 servient to the minister of the day? That it
 would enable that minister to cause the Act
 of Habeas Corpus to be suspended for more
 than seven years at a time? That it would
 render the system of *influence* more exten-
 sive and efficient? That it would make bo-
 roughs more venal? That it would throw
 more of them into the hands of the peers?
 That it would add to the long list of place-
 men, pensioners and grantees of any de-
 scription? That it would embolden ministers
 to add to the number of foreign troops in the
 kingdom? That it would increase the number
 of contractors, defaulters, and peculators? That
 it would add to the embarrassment, vexation,
 distress, poverty, misery, and degradation
 of character, which, owing to the all-per-
 vading system of taxation, are now so gene-
 ral in this once free and happy country?
 These are the points, upon which we *feel.*
 These are the points, as to which we call
 for the "*established guards of the consti-
 tution in church and state*". And, if the
 bill in question affect us in none of these
 points, I trust, Gentlemen, none of you will

be such miserable fools as to be misled by the hypocritical declamation of writers such as that whom I have just quoted.—He tells us, that the late ministers would have “repealed the Act of Supremacy and the Test Acts, as far as the army and navy were concerned.” Well, and what then! These are *now* of no avail whatever. They prevent the advancement of no man, in practice; and, even supposing the intended measure to have opened the door for promoting Roman Catholics, you must well know, that to promote any one, protestant or catholic, is the act of the king, and of *the king alone*; so that, all that this measure would have done, would be to *enable the king to promote Roman Catholics if he chose, leaving him at perfect liberty to follow his own inclination upon the subject*; in other words, it would have made that perfectly legal, which, in fact, is *now done* without the sanction of law, but with a general connivance. Whether this was attempting to “*force the conscience of the king*”; whether this was an attempt to subvert “our holy religion”; whether this would have placed the “church in danger”; you will easily decide.—But, this writer is alarmed, lest persons that are *not Christians* should, by the means of such a measure, get into offices in the army; nay, he fears, that it might open the doors to persons of *no religion at all*; just as if men who are not christians, or who have no religion at all, would be restrained from doing any thing by an oath taken upon the four books of the Gospel! What a miserable pretence! What shocking hypocrisy! The sincerity of this hireling writer is, indeed, rendered manifest enough by his stating, that by a dissolution of parliament, the king appeals to the *great body* of his subjects, just as if there were no such things as Treasury Boroughs; just as if there were no members sent into the Commons House through the influence of peers; just as if all was fair and free according to the spirit of the constitution and the letter of the law! What a villainous hypocrite! *Conscience*, indeed; and talk at this rate!—The Courier insists, however, that the cry of “*no popery*” shall be kept up; but, if the cry has no more success anywhere else than it has in Westminster, it will, I should think, be of little avail. He tells us, that we ought now to be afraid of popery because our ancestors of a hundred years ago were justly afraid of it; but, he well knows, that the circumstances are totally changed; he well knows, that there is no more reason to be afraid of popery now than there is to be afraid of witchcraft, which

was once a subject of legal provision and punishment. In fact, the cry of "no popery," and of "danger to the church", upon this occasion, is a mere trick to delude the people, and to turn their attention to the real cause of the struggle between the late and present ministry, as is also the cry of "toleration," on the other side. The former well knows, that popery is extinguished, and the latter knows, that, as to all practical purposes, toleration, with respect to the army and navy is already complete. The intended measure was merely to answer a party purpose, and the opponents of the late ministers seized hold of it as the lucky means of ousting them from their places. Both sides clamourously appeal to the constitution, that word of various interpretations; each accuses the other of a violation of the constitution; and the design of both, is, to draw the attention of the world from the selfish views, by which they are actuated.—The late ministers, however, finding that empty sounds are unavailing; finding that their cry is inferior in point of effect to that of their adversaries, betake themselves to something more likely to attract attention; and, accordingly their partizans assert in terms the most unqualified, that the real cause of the dissolution, at this time is to be found in the documents which have been discovered by the *Committee of Finance*. No, says the *Courier*, "because the speech of the Lords Commissioners says, that the subjects before that committee will be taken up by the next parliament." But, in the first place time will have been gained; secondly, the documents will have been for some months in the hands of the new ministers; thirdly, another committee, if appointed immediately upon the assembling of the new parliament, will not be able to make any considerable progress this year; fourthly, that committee will be composed of such persons as the majority of the House shall think proper; fifthly, I think, you will agree with me, that the majority of the House will be very like to agree with the new ministry; and sixthly, the natural conclusion, is, that the committee will be differently composed, and that its reports will breathe quite a different language and different sentiments.—The *Morning Post* says, that the parliament is dissolved, in order that the new ministry may be relieved from the embarrassing power of the opposition, and that they may "carry on the affairs of the nation with ease and comfort to themselves." This is fine talk! Yet, this is, in truth, the object of the dissolution; and, Gentlemen, only think of the state to which we must be re-

duced, when such a reason is publicly given in justification of a dissolution of parliament! Just as if the increase, thereby, of the minister's majority was *certain*! Plainly telling us, that it is for the sake of having a parliament devoted to their will; and, at the same time, us, that an appeal is made "to the sense of the people." Never was there, in the whole world, a people so grossly insulted, and, I must say it, never was there, generally speaking, a people, whose apathy, whose torpor, whose willing degradation, so richly deserved it.—But, to enable the new ministers to carry on the affairs of the nation "with *ease* and *comfort* to themselves," what need was there of a dissolution of parliament, seeing, that, in the space of ten days only, the new ministers, who, before they were in place, could obtain only about seventy votes, had obtained much more than one half of the votes of the whole house, having a majority of *forty six*. This fact, which cannot be denied, would lead one to conclude, that there must have been some other reason for the dissolution than merely that of obtaining a secure majority. Yet do the partizans of the Whig ministry stoutly deny, that the real object was the one alledged by the *Morning Chronicle*, who has been answered by his rival, the *Courier*, in an article which I shall insert, not only as it contains the justification of the measure, but as it contains also what there is to be urged in justification of Mr. Rose, and of the *supposed defaulter*. —"Whenever a faction cry out against any particular measure, we may take it for granted they do not so much feel or fear that it will be detrimental to the country, as that it will be destructive of their own factious views. Such is the feeling of "all the talents" with respect to the dissolution of parliament; they know that this appeal to the people cannot possibly be of the slightest injury to the rights and liberties of the people, but they know that it will be in the highest degree injurious to their own prospects and projects—they feel that the voice of the people is every where against them, and they dread looking their constituents in the face—they are trying, therefore, by every artifice to mislead the public mind; and though the people have been solemnly assured from the throne, that "his Majesty is anxious to recur to the sense of his people while the events which have recently taken place are yet fresh in their recollection," they are attempting to persuade them that his Majesty feels no such anxiety, but that parliament was dissolved

"to protect speculators and defaulters. Upon this subject we have some facts to state.—And first we must notice the following paragraph, contained in an article in the *Morning Chronicle*.—"We are happy however in being able to relate, in addition to the above circumstances, (the truth of which we challenge any man to deny) that the report of the committee of finance states in substance that a sum of £19,800 had been applied by a late paymaster of the forces to his own use; and that this fact came to the knowledge of his colleague, the right honourable George Rose, who did not give any directions to the clerks on the subject."—A respectable morning paper commenting on the above paragraph says, "This charge is of too serious a nature to permit the gentleman, whose character is thus aspersed, to be satisfied with a refutation in a newspaper: we are authorized to assert, that it will be made a matter of legal investigation, if it shall be found to be cognizable in a court of law. In the mean time, it is thought right to state, that the facts, as applicable to Mr. Rose, are utterly false. Mr. Rose was never the colleague of the paymaster of the forces alluded to in that situation. The transaction in question he never heard a syllable about till after he had retired from the duties of that office; when (after reproving the clerk whose duty it was to have made the communication while he was in office) he gave the advice that appeared to him to be proper on the occasion. These circumstances will be found in the minutes of the committee; how far they agree with what it is alledged is in the report of the committee, may hereafter be a subject of enquiry."—Upon Mr. Pitt's return to the administration in 1804, the person alluded to was removed from the Pay-Office, and Mr. Rose was appointed to succeed him—during the whole time he was there he had no intercourse whatever with the person, on account of the coldness naturally arising from the separation of Mr. Pitt (to whom Mr. Rose continued attached) from Mr. Addington—but Mr. Rose never heard a syllable on the subject alluded to till he had actually retired from the Pay-Office.—Even then, when the communication was made to him, after he had so withdrawn, no *criminality* appeared in the transaction, though it was apparent there was great *irregularity* in it. If it be now known that the money was received for *private purposes*, that discovery

“ must have been made by recent investigation. When the communication was made to Mr. Rose he gave the best advice he could.—Orders he could not give—which advice was to the proper officer to call on the person in question for an explanation of the matter, and to that person to make an immediate communication of the whole transaction to Lord Grenville and the then Paymaster General.—The transaction *was officially known to the late Treasury*, and was repeatedly under their consideration. They gave directions for the repayment of the money at certain periods, *without imputing any offence to the person concerned—no censure was expressed—no application to Parliament was made—no inquiry of any sort instituted on the subject, TILL THE LATE MINISTERS WERE OUT OF OFFICE.* And then an attempt is made to criminate a gentleman who never heard the remotest allusion to the subject while he was in office.—Such is the case, the truth of which we challenge any man to deny—and such are the particulars as they appear in the minutes of the committee.—If there be any other improper transactions discovered, can they be suppressed by the dissolution of parliament? Will they not be produced upon the assembling of the new one with redoubled force and effect? The discovery now alluded to, was *not made by the Committee*—the transaction had, as we have already shewn, been the subject of proceedings in the Treasury—the minutes of which board on the subject it is hoped will be called for, and the whole matter fully investigated when parliament meets. We shall then see, *when the honest indignation of the late ministers was first excited respecting it, and whether there was the same anxiety and eagerness to inform the country about it while they were in office, as when parliament was about to be dissolved.*—Aye, that is the rub. It was not until they were out of office; it was not until this engine was wanted for party purposes, that is to say, purposes connected with place and profit, that the Whigs thought of saying a word about the matter in public. We now find, that they had been long acquainted with the facts; that they had had the matter officially before them; and, so close did they keep it, so anxious were they to prevent it reaching the ears of the profane vulgar, that, not even a rumour of it found its way to the world, *until they were out of place.* Whether the fact was known to Mr. Rose when he was Paymaster, or not until

after he quitted the office; whether it be at all probable that he could be in the office for a year and a half without becoming acquainted with it: how it came to pass, that he should be informed of it after he was out of office; why, *as a member of parliament, as one of the guardians of the public purse*, he did not happen to make it the subject of inquiry in the House; and, what were the motives whence the exposure was reserved for this late hour: these are questions, which it might take some little consideration to answer; but, this we know, that, on the one side, it is asserted, that a sum of *nineteen thousand pounds* of the public money has been embezzled by a paymaster of the forces; that it is, on both sides, agreed, that this fact has been well known, for a considerable time, to several members of parliament; and we also know, that, until a great and mortal conflict of party arose, not one of those members, not one, no, not one of “the guardians of our purse,” said publicly a word upon the subject. With their quarrels we have little to do. With the means that they employ to assail one another, or to shield themselves, or their adherents, we need not much trouble ourselves; but, amongst them, the fact was well known, and, amongst them it was kept closely disguised, until it was brought forth by a contest for place and profit.—Here it is; in this fact, and in facts resembling it is, that consists the strength of the new ministry, as opposed to the Whigs. There was a time, when a cry about Jacobinism, or danger to the church, would have had great weight. But those cries have seen their day pass, every man’s attention being now turned to the *abuses in the expenditure of the public money*; and, when he takes time to reflect, he finds that the Whigs, *while in office*, did really nothing at all in the way of correcting those enormous abuses. To this simple view men confine their attentions. In vain would Mr. Whitbread, whose address to his late constituents I shall take care to insert, endeavour to excite a friendly feeling towards the late ministry by dwelling, with weighty emphasis, upon the *Scotch Judicature Bill* and the *abolition of the slave trade* and the *new plan of finance*. The latter now appears to be a mere bubble, and, as to the former two, there is not a reflecting man in the kingdom that cares one straw about them. To his statement respecting the Report of the Committee of Finance, which was, as he tells us, just about to be made, when the tap at the door put an end

to all further deliberation, we should have listened with great attention; but, the moment we hear of the circumstance of the report being suppressed by the dissolution, we ask, "why was it not presented before?" To which question it is impossible for him to give a plain and honest answer, without stating for motive that which would instantly draw from us an expression of total indifference as to which party shall obtain the preponderance. Had the late ministers, I mean the Whigs, acted up to those professions, by which they gained your confidence; had they not appointed boards upon boards of Commissioners, at an enormous expence to the country, but brought subjects of speculation and default at once before that House which ought to be the real guardians of the public money; had they even encouraged others so to; and had they proceeded to punish peculators and defaulters; then, indeed, would they have had the people with them. Then might they have laughed at the base hypocrisy of those, who are now running them down with a cry of *no popery*; and, indeed, that hypocritical trick never would have been thought of. But, the reverse they chose for a line of conduct. Under a shew of investigation, they were sedulously employed in forming schemes for the effectual protection of peculators; and, as in the case of Mr. Paull and Mr. Robson, the whole force of their influence was employed to prevent others from doing, that which they themselves were resolved not to do. Many are the peculators that have been talked of; but, where have we an account of any one sum that the Whigs caused to be *refunded*? Where is the single delinquent, whom they caused to be pillored or imprisoned? These are the questions that men ask of the Whigs, and these questions they cannot truly answer without depriving themselves of all ground whereon to claim a preference before their rivals, who, if they do no more than their predecessors, in the way of reformation, can, assuredly, not do less. And this, I repeat it, is the sole point, upon which men's attention is now earnestly fixed. Of the affairs of the continent; of conquests in South America, and of means of defence at home, they have not leisure to think. The reading of tax-papers, and the providing for the incessant demands of the tax-gatherer, take up all their time. Their present grievous burdens is the only subject upon which they can be expected to think; and, while they feel these burdens, they know that enormous speculations remain unpunished; they see no hope of preventing

them for the future; and they feel as men must feel under such circumstances. The last three years have brought to light most important truths relating to the public expenditure and to the representation in parliament. These truths must, and will, have their effect in due time; but, until then, it is perfectly useless to endeavour to fix the general attention upon any other object.—Now, Gentlemen, let us hear Mr. Whitbread, our old friend at Westminster. His address to the electors of the borough of Bedford contains some useful matter. It is good to hear it from him, and quite proper, that we should remember it.—“The King's ministers have rashly advised his Majesty to dissolve the Parliament which was first assembled for the dispatch of business on the 15th of December last; its duration has been short, but its career has been memorable.—The assiduity with which all public business has been dispatched is without precedent. The works which it has performed, and those in which it was engaged at the moment of its dissolution, will be recorded to its honour. In consequence of judicious arrangements, the election petitions, which have usually occupied the time and attention of the House of Commons during two or three years, would all have been decided in the course of one session. After wars so protracted and expensive, as you know those in which we are unhappily engaged to have been, a Plan of Finance was devised and adopted, notwithstanding the opposition of the persons now in power, adequate to the exigencies of the state, without imposing any fresh burthens upon the people. A committee was appointed to controul and reduce the public expenditure, and to diminish the amount of salaries. A bill was brought in under the sanction of that committee for prohibiting the grant of places in reversion. A plan for the reformation and bettering the condition of the labouring class of society was under consideration. Measures for the improvement of the courts of justice in Scotland were in progress through the House of Lords. The slave trade, after a struggle of 20 hours, was abolished.—At the moment the Commons were precipitately summoned to attend his Majesty's commission for the prorogation of the Parliament, preparatory to its dissolution, there was actually at their bar a special report from the committee above-mentioned, stating the discovery of some gross abuses in the department of the paymaster-general, which was thereby stopped. The bill to prohibit the grant of places in reversion is lost. More than 100 private bills carried to ad-

“vanced stages, at great expence to the parties
 “in them drop, and the improvement of the
 “country is impeded. At the same moment
 “the Scotch judges were in attendance in the
 “House of Lords, with their answers to cer-
 “tain questions relative to the administration
 “of justice in Scotland, for which purpose
 “they had been expressly called to London,
 “to the interruption of the ordinary duties of
 “their important offices. The usual act of
 “appropriation of the funds voted by Parlia-
 “ment has not been passed.—Under these
 “circumstances the King has been advised to
 “dissolve the Parliament, and in the speech
 “delivered by the Lord Chancellor in his Ma-
 “jesty's name, the assertion is made, that no
 “material interruption in the public business
 “will take place. In that speech satisfaction
 “is expressed at the adoption of those finan-
 “cial measures, which exempt the people
 “from the burthen of additional taxes, but
 “which the King's present ministers would
 “have persuaded the House of Commons to
 “reject, and the completion of which is pre-
 “vented by their conduct. It is professed to
 “inculcate a spirit of union, harmony, and
 “good will amongst all classes and descrip-
 “tions of the people, when at the same time
 “the only appearances of discord have been
 “excited, by the attempt of one of his Ma-
 “jesty's ministers to sow the seeds of religious
 “animosity in the neighbouring county of
 “Northampton, upon a ground which his col-
 “leagues have not avowed, and against his
 “principles, in that particular, many of them
 “have been heretofore solemnly pledged. In a
 “situation so alarming, and when the councils of
 “the King are guided by such persons, I have
 “thought it necessary to make this exposition
 “to you, my earliest, best, and constant friends;
 “I have treated with freedom the acts of
 “government and the speech delivered by the
 “Lord Chancellor in the king's name, be-
 “cause I abhor and deny the position lately
 “urged in parliament, and to which (as it
 “appears to me) countenance is given in the
 “terms of that speech, that the king can
 “ever act without an adviser; if that position
 “be admitted, the people may be without
 “redress, or the sovereign without security—
 “by the constitution both are impossible.—
 “Of my own conduct during the important
 “interval which has elapsed since I last ad-
 “dressed you, I say nothing, because it has
 “been so public that it cannot have escaped
 “your notice. I court your enquiry, and if
 “you are satisfied in the result of it, I hope
 “for your votes at the present election. If
 “you do me the honour again to return me,
 “I shall indeed be proud of it, and I will
 “again endeavour to do my duty.—I have the

“honor to be, gentlemen, with every senti-
 “ment of attachment and respect, your
 “grateful and obedient servant, SAMUEL
 “WHITBREAD.”—Yes, this may have
 “been as foul play as Mr. Whitbread pleases;
 “there may have been manœuvring and jocky-
 “ing enough. All may have been as he
 “would wish us to perceive it; but, I defy
 “him to show, that he and his party have been
 “so foully dealt by, *as he and his party have*
dealt by you and Mr. Paull; and, if I had
 “been at his elbow, when he was setting
 “down the deeds of the short parliament, I
 “should certainly have requested him not to
 “omit the *unanimous vote for reprimanding*
Mr. Paull, whose only crime was, that of
 “denying a charge falsely, and to his face, al-
 “leged against him. I rejoice that that par-
 “liament is dissolved. That act alone de-
 “served a death somewhat more than political.
 “One of the members of it rises and charges a
 “person, who stood as a petitioner at the bar,
 “with having repeatedly gone out to commu-
 “nicate with and prompt the witnesses; the
 “petitioner, who had never stirred from the
 “bar, feeling as any man of truth and of spirit
 “must feel, speaks in his own defence and de-
 “nies the charge. Upon this, Lord Howick,
 “the minister, moves that he be punished by a
 “reprimand, and some of the members even
 “propose that he shall be sent to prison. One
 “member, however, Mr. Whitbread himself,
 “asserts that the petitioner, on whom he has
 “had his eye constantly fixed, has never
 “moved from the bar, therein flatly contra-
 “dicting the assertion of the accusing member,
 “Sir Watkin Wynne. “That is no matter,”
 “says Lord Howick, “I still say reprimand
 “him, reprimand him,” after the manner
 “of the Jews, when they importuned Pontius
 “Pilate; and reprimanded he was. Such a
 “proceeding would have become an assembly
 “of Bashaws. I rejoice that it no longer
 “exists. I rejoice that I have an opportunity
 “of speaking my mind of it. “But, its suc-
 “cessor” No matter. I
 “care not for that. It is a satisfaction to me
 “to see my oppressors humbled; and, in
 “every human breast, this is a feeling perfect-
 “ly natural and justifiable.—There is, too,
 “gentlemen, another consideration, and that
 “is, that the Whigs were only *beginning*. My
 “Lord Howick was merely making a com-
 “mencement in his career of authority; and,
 “with a parliament ready to support him;
 “or, rather, ready to let him do what he
 “pleased, in a case like that above referred to,
 “would he not have been, if possible, ten
 “thousand times more arrogant than Pitt,
 “whose character and conduct he so often
 “eulogized, and whose example he so strictly

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followed? One of the first acts of the Whigs was to prevent the trial of Lord Melville to be published in the newspapers, or in any shape except in one monopolized book, by which means the *public* have never been made acquainted with the evidence given. And now they complain, that Lord Melville has supplanted them. How justly are they punished! This act was also a beginning with the press. What they would have done, if they had subdued the king, we may easily guess; and, in short, when we consider what they did, and what they left undone, it is impossible not to rejoice, that both they and their parliament are politically dead — Mr. Whitbread, Gentlemen, talks about “the *constitution*,” and, it would be strange indeed if he did not; for when have you heard a stickler for party who had not the word everlastingly in his mouth? But, though Mr. Whitbread can complain of the Speech as unconstitutional; though he can see something very dangerous to the constitution in the king’s *changing his ministers* without a responsible adviser; though he can see this, which I cannot see, he thought it, I suppose, perfectly constitutional to set on foot that famous Subscription, which was raised for the purposes of depriving you of the use of your elective franchise; and when Mr. Whitbread again complains of the *hypocrisy* of his opponents, remind him, I pray you, of his speech at the last of Mr. Sheridan’s election dinners, where he congratulated the company on their triumph, which, he said, was so much the more agreeable to him that it had been achieved *without any undue influence*; when, at the same time, he had been the great author of that Subscription, which has been brought to light by the Committee, and to which subscription alone, and the nefarious means that it enabled our enemies to resort to, the *triumph* of Mr. Sheridan was to be ascribed. Mr. Whitbread well knew, that, if your free voices had been heard, Mr. Paull would have been the member. This he knew. This he cannot deny; and, he cannot deny, that *he* had the principal hand in stifling that voice. Let him now himself complain of foul play, till his lungs are exhausted. Let him now cry out against unconstitutional dealing, till he be weary. What care you or I for his complaints? Us, and all the people, who are not subservient to his views, he would deprive of every benefit of the constitution. Except as the tools of himself and his party, he would not, if he could have his will, suffer us to exist. Let him complain to those who received his subscription money. Let those degraded wretches condole with him. From

us he merits, on this occasion, nothing but contempt.—Another reason, too, for my rejoicing at the death of the late parliament, is, that it affords those electors who have yet any part of their franchise remaining, and especially *you*, an opportunity of choosing men in whom you ought to confide, and that one of those men ought to be Mr. Paull the whole nation is convinced. Much had he done when you before gave him your votes; but, what he has since done entitles him to your gratitude in a degree not to be expressed. You would have had, on the last occasion, no election, had it not been for him; and, had it not been for his exertions, for his unparalleled exertions and sacrifices since, you never would have had another. His firmness and perseverance, his devotion to the public cause, have prevented your city from becoming a close borough. It is from pure fear of him that those who before attempted to monopolize you have decamped. That you have, practically speaking, any voice at all to give, you owe solely to him, and, therefore, not to support him, upon the present occasion, would argue a degree of depravity, which I should be loth to ascribe to any part of my countrymen, and particularly to you. With catholic bills, or ministerial pledges, or royal consciences, you have nothing to do. You want, in the House of Commons, a member, who, in spite of seduction and of threats, will set about the pursuit of public robbers, and who will never desist, until he has brought them to punishment. This is the man you want, and this man you have in Mr. Paull. Of the several millions of men, of whom this nation consists, there is, perhaps, scarcely one other, who, under all the embarrassments and dangers that he has had to encounter, would have done what Mr. Paull has done for the maintaining of his rights, and your rights still more than his own. It is not so rare to find persons of talent as of firmness, industry, and perseverance; and all these great public virtues are possessed by Mr. Paull in the highest degree. Two such men might do a great deal, even in the House of Commons; but, one man, if you cannot obtain two, may do much, particularly in the way of bringing to light useful facts, such facts as must, in time, produce their due effect. But, I freely confess to you, that, if, upon this great occasion, you fail in the performance of your duty, all your complaints, like those of Mr. Whitbread, will be a subject of ridicule rather than of compassion. You should remember, that the question with you now is, not whether you shall have a real representative in the next parliament; but, whether

you shall ever have another real representative as long as the present mode of choosing members of parliament shall exist. It is a contest for your franchises; and, if you neglect to exert yourselves, of those franchises you ought to be deprived. These are not times for flattery. In the series of letters, which I have done myself the honour to address to you, I have, first or last, though in a manner somewhat irregular, laid before you the whole of the state of the country, in a way not easily misunderstood. You must see what is the cause of all our calamities; you must perceive, that it is in your power to aid in removing that cause; and, if you fail to afford that aid, you may still complain, but you will find no one to pity. In the anxious hope, that you will not be found wanting upon this great and trying occasion, I remain, with those sentiments of respect and admiration, which your conduct at the last election were so well calculated to inspire,

Your faithful friend,
And obedient servant,
WM. COBBETT.

Botley, 30th April, 1807.

DOMESTIC OFFICIAL PAPER.

CITY ADDRESS ON THE CHANGE OF MINISTERS.—April 22. This day the deputation of the corporation of London, consisting of the lord mayor, twelve aldermen, the recorder, sheriffs, and twelve commoners, presented the following Address to his Majesty at the Queen's House,

"To the King's most excellent Majesty. The humble and dutiful address of the lord mayor, aldermen and commons of the city of London, in common council assembled.

"Most gracious Sovereign,—We your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the lord mayor, aldermen and commons of the city of London, in common council assembled, approach the Throne with our warmest and most unfeigned gratitude for the dignified and decided support and protection recently given by your Majesty to the Protestant reformed religion, as by law established, and for the firm and constitutional exercise of your royal prerogative to preserve the independence of the crown.—Deeply sensible as your Majesty's faithful citizens of London at all times are, of the great and substantial blessings we enjoy under your Majesty's paternal government, we should justly incur the imputation of criminal indifference as the first municipal body in your

Majesty's dominions, were we lightly to consider the scrupulous regard and fervent zeal which have invariably guided your Majesty for the preservation of our religion, laws and liberties, more particularly at this interesting conjuncture; or silently to withhold our loyal acknowledgments, due to the best of Kings, for his wise and steady resolution to secure inviolate our glorious constitution in church and state.—We contemplate, Sire, with the warmest affection and most profound veneration, the exercise of those unextinguishable principles in the Royal breast, which protect in every situation, the religious interests of your people, and provide for the happiness and freedom of posterity, by guarding the Protestant succession in your Majesty's Royal House on the Throne of the United Kingdom.—Your Majesty's faithful citizens of London feel it no less their pride and exultation, than their bounden and indispensable duty, to express the sentiments of satisfaction which animates their hearts, at the wise and dignified measures pursued by your Majesty, securing the glorious independence of the crown as one of the three estates of our well tempered and invaluable constitution.—That your Majesty may be long spared to us by an overruling Providence, and that the people of this land may be long sensible of the blessings of your Majesty's most auspicious government in the protection of every thing dear to them, is the ardent prayer of your Majesty's loyal citizens of London.—Signed by order of court.—HENRY WOODTHORPE."

To which address his Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious answer:—

"I receive with the greatest satisfaction the assurances you give me of your concurrence in those principles which have governed my conduct on the late important occasion. It has ever been my object to secure to all descriptions of my subjects the benefits of religious toleration; and it affords me particular gratification to reflect, that during my reign these advantages have been more generally and extensively enjoyed than at any former period. But, at the same time, I never can forget what is due to the security of the ecclesiastical establishment of my dominions, connected as it is with our civil constitution, and with all those blessings which, by the favour of Providence, have hitherto so eminently distinguished us amongst the nations of the world."